

Butterfly ballot study creates media storm

Prof says U.S. dilemma could have been avoided.

2

Taking public institutions to the public

Academics need to incorporate the growing role of public relations in their teaching and research. And the public affairs office is here to help.

3

Happy Holidays!

Next *Folio* is Jan. 12, 2001; deadline is Jan. 5

7

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FFAIRS

DR. ALLAN TUPPER SAYS...
BREAKTHROUGH IN DIABETES RESEARCH
BUTTERFLY BALLOTS STRUCTURALLY FLAWED
LANGUAGE CAFÉ OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
STUDIO THEATRE PRESENTS

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

folio

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Another breakthrough for diabetes

Researchers "fool" stomach and intestine cells into producing insulin

By Phoebe Dey

Researchers at the University of Alberta have successfully fooled gut cells in mice into producing insulin, a discovery that eventually could affect millions of diabetics.

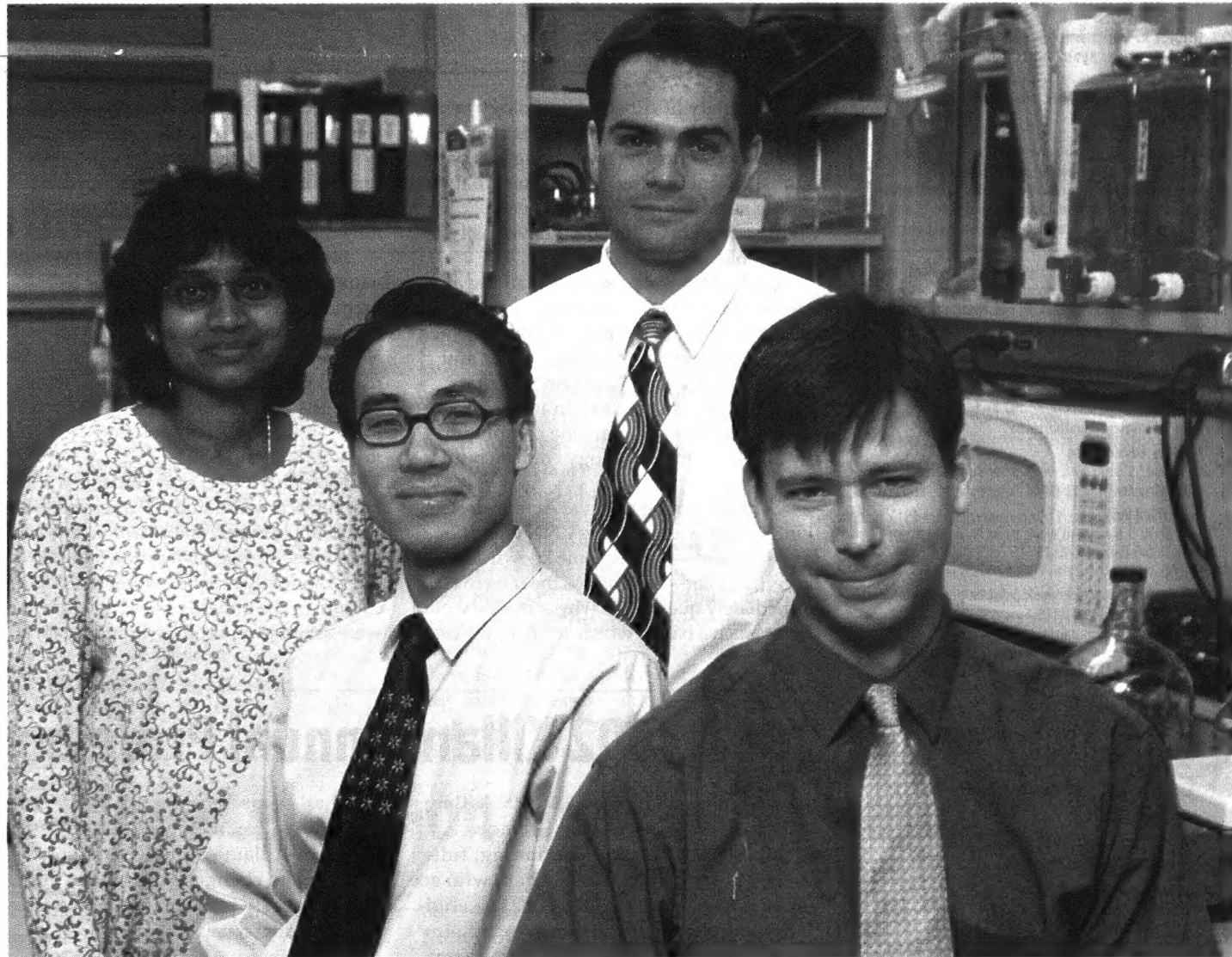
"I want to emphasize this is a basic research project we've been able to do in transgenic mice, and we still have to develop a viable system to work in humans," said Dr. Tim Kieffer, principal researcher on a paper published in the Dec. 8 edition of *Science*, one of the world's top research journals. "But it's still exciting because it's a 180-degree turn from what other groups are trying to do."

What sets Kieffer and his team's work apart is they have engineered the production of insulin to occur precisely at the moment it is needed to manage blood sugar levels—a hurdle gene-therapy researchers around the world have been trying to solve for years.

The absence of sufficient insulin production results in diabetes. Insulin is normally released by pancreatic beta cells immediately following a meal to move sugar from the blood into the tissues where it is needed. The U of A team found that endocrine cells have the capability to manufacture and store insulin cells and release them right after a meal.

While other researchers are trying to duplicate the beta cell, Kieffer's team identified a suitable beta cell surrogate in the stomach and intestine that releases the hormone GIP immediately after eating.

"We have targeted naturally existing glucose-responsive cells for the production of insulin," said Kieffer, from the Department of Physiology. "By this method, insulin is manufactured and stored in the engineered gut cells, ready



Continuing a bright tradition in diabetes research: (from left to right) Bama Dayahandan, Dr. Anthony T. Cheung, Jamie Lewis and Dr. Timothy Kieffer.

to be released upon the consumption of a meal. We took the GIP promoter and linked it to the insulin gene—the gut cells think they are making GIP but we've fooled them into making insulin."

The announcement comes on the heels of the U of A's now-famous islet cell transplantation discovery, during which 12 Type 1 diabetics were freed from insulin injections. In fact, two team members—Dr. Gregory Korbitt and Dr. Ray Rajotte—are co-authors in the newest study as well.

If the latest research can be applied to humans—he doesn't expect clinical trials for 10 years—it means even better results for diabetics, said Kieffer.

"The Edmonton Protocol is very promising but is presently restricted by both tissue shortage and the requirement for anti-rejection drugs. Therefore, we are exploring alternative ways to make other cells in the body take over automatic regulated production of insulin... This is a start and we're very excited to see it

worked at this stage. Our hope is to transfer this research to humans."

Other co-authors include Dr. Anthony Cheung, Bama Dayanandan, Jamie Lewis and several colleagues from U.S. universities. The work was funded by the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Canadian Diabetes Association and the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International. ■

Canative donation makes history

By Ryan Smith

The University of Alberta is celebrating the largest single donation from an aboriginal organization to a post-secondary institution in Canada. A \$500,000 endowment from Canative Housing Corporation, a non-profit company that provides housing for First Nations people, will be used to recruit aboriginals to the U of A, particularly those from Alberta and the north.

"I applaud Canative Housing's continued commitment to the post-secondary education of Alberta's native community," said U of A President Rod Fraser at a Faculty Club celebration Dec. 5 to thank Canative Executive Director Herb Belcourt for the

donation. "This is very good news for our students, native and non-native alike."

Belcourt, who founded Canative 30 years ago along with Georges Brosseau and Orval Belcourt, referred to the endowment as an investment not a donation. "We need to encourage Métis and other aboriginals to get an education. I only hope with this endowment that 20 years from now we can look back and say, 'Yes, we did the right thing.'"

"I wish there were more Herb Belcourts out there," said U of A Native Student Services Co-ordinator Lewis Cardinal. Cardinal has been instrumental in

increasing the number of U of A aboriginal students to a projected number of more than 1,000 in 2000-01, up from 300 six years ago. "This is just the beginning. In 1991 the U of A set a goal—the only western Canadian university to set such a goal—to have aboriginal students make up at least 5 per cent of its enrollment. We're on our way to that but we still have a lot of work to do."

Cardinal said the endowment will be used for a recruitment and community relations program, which will include the hiring of a full-time aboriginal recruiter. "We already recruit year round," Cardinal

said. "We train and pay students to attend round dances, pow-wows and aboriginal schools.. They are the best recruiters because they're role models. Now we'll have more resources and opportunities to reach more people."

Belcourt feels the message is an important one to send and with this endowment he's backing his words with actions. "We see in the news so many negative things happening with aboriginal children—gas sniffing, alcohol and drug abuse, babies born with fetal alcohol syndrome—and we need to encourage our children away from that. The road to this is education," he said. ■

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University of Alberta



Where the world meets

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More funding for World's training facility

By Sandra Halme

The U of A approved an additional \$1 million Dec. 7 for the South Campus Athletic Training Facility (SCATF). However in its decision, the Board of Governors Finance and Property Committee stressed the extra funding will be raised from the community and not drawn from the university's operating budget.

Higher than expected costs for artificial turf and for work on the sub-strata beneath the track and the field are two major reasons for the \$1,065,000 increase in construction costs. The facility is to be the training venue for athletes participating in the 2001 World Championships in Athletics, Aug. 3-12.

Citing the importance of this legacy facility to the U of A and to the city, the committee said the additional funding

will be added to the original \$1.2 million being raised from the community. The original estimate for the SCATF was \$9.2 million, with the Edmonton 2001 World Championships in Athletics providing \$7.93 million and the remaining \$1.2 million being raised by the U of A.

The dual-field training facility will become a training and competition venue for university athletes following The World's. Community and recreational sport leagues will also make extensive use of it. Construction, to be completed by the spring 2001, has already begun on the two fields.

The west field will be a track and field legacy including pole vault areas, long and triple jump pits, high jump areas and throwing areas for hammer, shot put and

discus—all surrounded by a 400-metre Mondo track. The east field will have an artificial surface designed for football and field hockey, including lighting for night games and practices, as well as a four-lane, 125-metre warm-up runway. An accompanying indoor facility will include classroom and aerobic room space, a fitness centre area, locker rooms, concession and lounge areas, press box and office/meeting room.

The Edmonton 2001 World Championships in Athletics is the third-largest sporting event in the world and is expected to bring more than 3,000 athletes, coaches and officials from more than 200 countries to Edmonton. Athletes will compete in 24 men's and 22 women's events. More than 2,500 media are expected to attend and provide coverage around the world. ■

Butterfly ballot study starts media storm

By Phoebe Dey

A University of Alberta psychology professor has waded into the U.S. presidential election controversy, arguing in a paper published online Nov. 30 in *Nature* that the hoopla surrounding the Palm Beach County, Florida ballot could have easily been avoided.

"I'm a little surprised with all the attention our paper is receiving," said Dr. Robert Sinclair of his interviews with such media giants as the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*. "This isn't all that complicated a study; it didn't take a rocket scientist to do this. Someone completing my 200-level methodology course could have done it."

On the morning after the American election, Sinclair was watching CNN when he saw the ballot—what became known as the butterfly ballot—flash across the screen. He immediately questioned why someone would design such a ballot, which arranges the can-

didates names on alternating lines in two columns. "It was obviously problematic."

His hunch was correct as the Al Gore camp complained thousands of voters mistakenly voted for Pat Buchanan when they meant to vote for Gore.

Sinclair called a colleague at Pennsylvania State University to ask for help in preparing a study on the ballot. "Fortunately we had an upcoming Canadian election, so we used the leaders of the Canadian parties and designed it so the leaders of the two dominant parties appeared in the first and second positions, just like in the U.S.," said Sinclair.

More than 300 U of A students were the first subjects of the study. Participants were randomly assigned one of two ballots and were asked to vote for a prime minister. They randomly received either the single-column or the butterfly ballot and voters were asked to report for whom they in-

tended to vote. Results showed that the butterfly ballot was more confusing. Sinclair also went off-campus a few days later and by then, was able to use an exact modification of the actual Florida ballot. When the results were compared, Sinclair found 20 per cent erroneously voted for Joe Clark, the candidate who occupied the same position on the ballot as Pat Buchanan.

Sinclair didn't conduct the study because he supports one candidate over the other.

"First of all, I'm Canadian and second of all, I couldn't care less who the president of the U.S. is," he said. "I was interested in the social science theory of methodology. I'm also not a lawyer, so it's not clear to me whether this should be used in courts, but if someone would have had the foresight to do this before, it would have prevented a lot of problems."

View *Nature's* Web site: www.nature.com/nature/ ■

2001-2002 Killam Annual Professorships

Applications for the 2001-2002 Killam Annual Professorships are now available. All regular, continuing, full-time academic faculty members who are not on leave during 2001-2002 are eligible to apply. Deans, department chairs and other senior university administrators with personnel responsibilities shall not normally be eligible for Killam Annual Professorships. Associate deans and associate department chairs are eligible providing they do not have personnel responsibilities. Up to eight Killam Annual Professors will be selected by a subcommittee of the Killam Trusts Committee; no more than two Professorships shall be awarded to staff members in any one faculty in any given year. Each Killam Annual Profes-

sor shall be presented with a \$3,500 prize and a commemorative scroll. The duties of Killam Annual Professors shall not be changed from those that they regularly perform as academic staff members.

The primary criterion for selection shall be a record of outstanding scholarship and teaching over three or more years as evidenced by any or all of research publications, creative activities, presented papers, supervision of graduate students, and courses taught. The secondary criterion shall be substantial contributions to the community beyond the University of Alberta, as evidenced by community involvement directly linked to the applicant's university responsibilities and activities.

Awards are tenable for 12 months commencing July 1, 2001. The completed application must be received at the Office of the Vice-President (Research), 3-7 University Hall, by 4:30 p.m., Friday, Feb. 23, 2001. The awardees shall be announced by early May, and they will be formally recognized at the Killam Luncheon in the autumn of 2001.

Applications and further details are available on the home page of the Vice-President (Research) at: http://www.ualberta.ca/VPRESEARCH/killam/klm_prof2.htm

Please contact Annette Kujda, administrative assistant, Office of the Vice-President (Research) at extension 8342 or email: annette.kujda@ualberta.ca if you have any questions. ■

Taking public institutions to the public

Academics need to take on the growing role of public relations in teaching and research. And the public affairs office is here to help.

By Gilbert A. Bouchard

Florida's controversial two-winged "butterfly" ballots may have been Vice-President Al Gore's greatest political headache, but for the University of Alberta they've proven to be a public relations coup. The American election quagmire was a textbook illustration of the energetic new face of public scholarship and of the more comprehensive attitude towards post-secondary external affairs activities.

"It started with one of our researchers in psychology, Dr. Robert Sinclair, watching the American election results (on Nov. 8, the morning after the election). He realized the voting dilemma was a natural psychology experiment," says Dr. Ken Norrie, dean of the Faculty of Arts. "The experiment turned out to be major story with a lot more people getting to hear about the U of A because of it." See 'Butterfly Ballot' on page 2.

Sinclair hypothesized that the ballots, which arranged the candidates' names on alternating lines in two columns, were structurally flawed and could have swung the vote, leading thousands of potential Gore supporters mistakenly voting for Pat Buchanan. To prove his point, Sinclair created an exact mock-up of the actual Florida ballot substituting the names of Canadian political leaders. In an off-campus mock vote a few days after the American elections, 20 per cent of 300 Edmontonians erroneously voted for Joe Clark, the candidate who on

Sinclair's ballot occupied the same position as Buchanan did in the Florida original—the same percentage as Gore supporters claimed had been miscast.

A write-up of Sinclair's work was promptly featured in the British science journal *Nature* and, with the help of the university's public affair's department, was subsequently picked up by dozens of major newspapers around the globe.

This frenzied, and pleasantly surprising, media bonanza underlines to Norrie not only the great public role academics do and should play, but also the great hunger on the part of the public for the fruits of scholarship—a hunger the U of A has striven to fill over the last decade with a more aggressive public outreach program.

"In the past, universities didn't feel the need to explain themselves. With governments fairly flush with money in the '60s and '70s, they really didn't have to," says Norrie. "But the days when we can sit isolated on the south side of the river are gone forever."

Norrie believes this trend to more public justification and greater transparency is a good thing for academia. Witness the flood of news stories about cutting-edge university research: the U of A consistently garners on average about 800 mentions or stories in national Canadian media per month. This places the U of A among the top three or four medical-doctoral universities in Canada in terms of national media exposure. But the process of getting the message out has proved to be no easy feat,

given the range of university scholarship that spreads "from medical research to drama and music performers."

It's a challenge academics have to embrace as they compete for dollars in an ever-competitive marketplace. Norrie says public scholarship and public service have always been a part of a university professor's core job description, along with teaching, research and community service, but not necessarily at this current intensity. "The reality is that most of us have not been trained on how to convey this information [to the media and the general public]. We're more used to teaching in a classroom setting. Fortunately we have some expert staff in public affairs that come over and provide us with that necessary media training."

For Lee Elliott, director of the Office of Public Affairs, providing that key public relations support, training and the structure for the university's 3,800 researchers is the means to the larger end of strengthening ties with the external community. "Our No. 1 belief is that we're here to engage the community with the excitement occurring at the university, bringing them in very often by the process of story telling."

From conducting media relations, to launching the popular ExpressNews Web site (averaging just under a half-million hits a month), to publishing Folio and providing media training, the public affairs department co-ordinates a growing number of special events as well, such as the Saturday Sampler public lecture series—all with the

larger goal of increasing the U of A's public profile and media share.

"We've become much more aggressive in getting our story out there," says Elliott. "It's important to realize public relations is vital not only in helping secure the university's funding, but also in the recruitment of staff and students. We have to make sure that we build that basic awareness of what the U of A is all about. We have to keep in mind that the university is a learning community that needs different constituents to join in to make us strong. We're facing heavy competition for those constituents to join other learning communities."

As important as public affairs may be, professors face a difficult task of keeping that aspect of their job in balance, especially given the demands public outreach involves.

"Not only does each interview or article demand its own research and preparation time, you also have to build in time for everything from travel time to the studios to general talks about issues with reporters," says Dr. Allan Tupper, political science professor. "I do a large bit of public relations—up to 400 interviews a year—not to mention meetings with visiting business leaders and public officials. It's a whole new set of demands."

The challenge for the future, says Elliott, will be to continue to become more effective in getting stories out to the media and the public without taking professors' energy away from teaching or research.

"It will become an even larger part of our institutional culture," she concludes. ■

folio letters to the editor

In support of a sustainable management plan

I write in support of the views expressed by Prof. Sandra Niessen in her letter published in *Folio*, Dec. 1, 2000. While I'm not aware of the specific issue of purchasing wind electricity for the Human Ecology Theme House, I do endorse the idea that the University of Alberta should be a leader in developing policies to guide its activities in order to protect the biophysical environment and promote social justice. Although some faculty members teach courses and conduct research on topics related to these concerns, the university community as a whole needs to become more active in develop-

ing and promoting policies to govern our consumption and marketing activities. As one example, are we even aware of the conditions under which merchandise using the university's name, trademark or images and sold through the Bookstore is manufactured and by whom? Prof. Niessen has raised an important topic for further discussion and action within the university community.

Sincerely,
Timothy F. Hartnagel
Professor of Sociology and
Academic Dean, St Joseph's College

I appreciated Dr. Sandra Niessen's contribution to *Folio* about our commitment at U of A to environmental protection and social justice. It is indeed remarkable that we do not have a sustainable management plan, or even talk about it as something desirable. I find I have little enlightening to say to students who are concerned about the environment and ask about what the University of Alberta is doing about it, other than pointing lamely to bits of xeriscaping and the remnants of the "Lights Off Please" signs on switchplates. There is more of course but it is remarkably inconspicuous.

It should not require a "groundswell of support" to initiate a plan that makes

moral, political and economic sense. The majority of people on campus doubtless would support such a plan, if asked. It is not the sort of thing one opposes, because to do so is either to countenance unsustainable management practices or a degree of unreflectiveness and irresponsibility on the part of managers. It does not even require much in the line of "leadership" given that the mechanisms have been long since worked out and implemented by many comparable institutions and, of course, many corporations. It is high time we got on with it.

Dr. Margaret Van de Pitte
Department of Philosophy

Folio editor to produce television show in Singapore

By Geoff McMaster

Folio editor Lucianna Ciccocioppo leaves the U of A this month to return to her first love – broadcast journalism. She will take up a position at CNBC Asia, based in Singapore, producing a half-hour Australian stock market report.

"It really is bittersweet," she says, referring to her big move. "If I didn't work with such a great bunch of people it would be easier. I feel like I'm leaving two families—I have to say goodbye in Edmonton and in Toronto [where she's originally from], and it's tough."

Ciccocioppo graduated from the University of Toronto with a political science

degree in 1991 and then got a job as a community television producer for what is now Roger's Cable T.V. in Toronto. Eager to work her way into a newsroom, she went back to school, earned a master's degree in journalism from the University of Western Ontario and then landed a position in the CBC's national radio newsroom in Toronto.

Five years ago she decided to take up a short-term contract position reporting and producing for CBC Radio in Edmonton. Layoffs soon forced her to look for work once again, and within six months she ended up in the U of A's Office of Public Affairs as a writer and media relations of-

ficer. In 1998 she became editor of *Folio*.

"I like to think I put a more human face on *Folio* and that I've helped liven up some of the stories," she says. "I've tried to help make everyone's research come alive on the page."

Ciccocioppo says she'd eventually like to break into the North American television market, perhaps producing documentaries. In the meantime she promises to check in on us regularly on the Web.

"I'm really looking forward to keeping in touch and hearing about the great things going on at the U of A. I'm certainly leaving with a sense of pride." ■

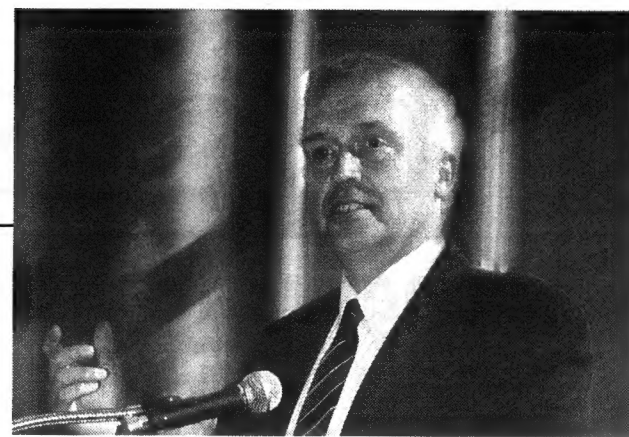


Folio editor Lucianna Ciccocioppo in Singapore last month. She liked it so much, she's heading back!

message from the president

Telling the world about the importance of 'critical thinking skills'

By Dr. Rod Fraser



Dr. Rod Fraser

At this time of year, a common question is asked by prospective students and their parents alike: "Why pursue a university education, when I can get a perfectly good job with a college diploma or a technical certificate?"

We can send numbers flying back and forth about the employment success rates of our graduates and average life-time earning potentials, but once the dust settles, our debate must move beyond job-talk. It is not solely the mandate of universities to prepare workers—we prepare leaders.

Over my next few columns, I want to explore a list of "desired outcomes" that the University of Alberta considers crucial to the preparation of our leaders of tomorrow: from gaining knowledge within specific disciplines, to unleashing creative

talents, to development of the "whole person." At the top of this list is "critical thinking," a somewhat slippery fish of an outcome to define.

Baron and Sternberg see critical thinking as "reasonable, reflective thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do" (*Teaching and Thinking Skills*, 1987). It can address issues as concrete as questioning the standard reasoning about the choice of materials for the construction of a high-rise, or as abstract as hearing what is *not* said by a party leader during political debate.

Our former dean of arts, Dr. Patricia Clements, has often said critical thinking is "independence of mind; it enables a reasonable rejection of received truths in the absence of evidence. It prompts individuals to think things through themselves and

to look for new and alternative ways of seeing." We hear this described as "thinking outside the box"—not sliding into the way things are done, but looking for new ways of doing things.

This outcome of "critical thinking," then, extends beyond the working lives of our graduates. It provides tools for understanding the world in which they live, their relationships with others, and the rich variety of activities and emotions that make up human life. As a society, we have the best chance of achieving success when our policy-makers are critical thinkers themselves, and are not solely guided by conventional wisdom.

So, how do we ensure critical thinking is an outcome of every University of Alberta undergraduate student's education? Is it possible or useful to extract the critical

thinking process from experiences that produce it, perhaps by offering courses explicitly dedicated to exploring a set of rules or methods? I would argue the desired outcome is stimulated, no matter what the discipline, through study of uncommon problems and creative encounters with very different points of view. In addition, the opportunity to interact with professors and fellow students in the context of an intercultural or international experience is invaluable to developing a critical perspective.

Whether through the study of Greek poetry, Italian architecture or a religious approach to illness, the student who develops imagination and intellectual problem solving through the stimulation of a university education can be counted on to bring these skills to any challenge he or she takes on. ■

opinion guest column

Pulp fiction part 2: The Sequel

By Dr. Peter Swirski, Department of Comparative Literature, Religion and Film/Media Studies

This is the second of a two-part guest series by Dr. Peter Swirski. You can read his first piece at: www.ualberta.ca/ExpressNews/ideas/guest/2000/112700.htm

According to the plot of the greatest cultural whodunit of all, popular fiction has strangled the noble art of writing. Like in all cheesy detective fictions, this is a red herring. The book is not dead—it is only the academic novel that smells funny.

Let us examine the facts behind the "death" of the novel. Despite all forecasts and media-fed impressions, book publishing has flourished since 1950, the dawn of the TV era. World-wide book production, as expressed in number of titles, has increased more than threefold between 1950 and 1980, up to 725,000 titles from 230,000. The number of book copies printed, estimated at 2.5 billion in 1950, was a whopping nine billion in 1980.

The numbers closer to home are even more impressive. New titles released annually in the U.S. more than quadrupled between 1950 and 1991, to 50,000. In the same period the number of bookstores shot up to 25,000 from more than 8,000, and the total 1991 book sales were 35 times greater than in 1950, ballooning to more than US \$16 billion.

Besides proving that the novel is *not* dead, what else do recent statistics tell us? Two things must be singled out. The first is the negligible percentage of books accorded attention by literary critics and scholars—the classics, poetry and new literary fiction—among this renaissance of reading. The estimates for book distribution through American general retailers show, for the four key categories of fiction, their respective shares of the 1985 market were approximately: popular fiction (30 per cent), best-sellers (12 per cent), classics

(one per cent), literary fiction and poetry (0.3 per cent). Of even greater resonance, however, is the comparative index to contemporary book culture: classics, literary fiction and poetry amount to less than three per cent of the four relevant categories.

Let's face it. The sea of literature that washes daily over our society, the type of ideas it disseminates, the nature of values it feeds back into public opinion and political decision-making, the range of subjects and concerns it touches on, and the level of cultural awareness it shapes, dwarves the ivory tower into a check-threatened ivory castle on a busy cultural chessboard. Simply put, there is a gulf the size of George W.'s chutzpah between the public and the academics in what they buy, read and peg their cultural literacy on.

The knee-jerk defence that the high-brow three per cent forms the cream of the literary crop must contend with several obvious rejoinders. Quite apart from the demonstrable inaccuracy of such claims, such aesthetic elitism is misplaced when we look at literature in its socio-cultural context. Moreover, a defence of this kind could hold only to the extent that popular novels routinely ranked a level of critical analysis comparable to the canon, which they manifestly do not. Interestingly enough, when occasional genre writers are pulled out of the literary cellar, with their jackets dusted and their pedigrees suppressed, they are discovered to be not so shabby at all, as evidenced by the spate of recent professional workshops on Bram Stoker, Raymond Chandler or Stephen King.

Everyone knows there are two kinds of literature: that which is read and that which is studied in the classroom. Behind

this polarity lies the capricious machinery of literary canon selection. One example must suffice. During his career, few writers could rival Ring Lardner in popular and critical acclaim, with Hemingway among the many cognoscenti who praised his popular style. Lardner's syndicated sales far exceeded Hemingway's, and his best fiction, such as the celebrated *You Know Me Al* series, earned him critical

accolades around the country.

Yet today even second-rate Hemingway is a bull of a classic, while Lardner's stories rest in peace at the cemetery labelled "popular fiction." Is it because Lardner was a humourist writing in the vernacular he knew from years as an itinerant sportswriter? But that should place him in the populist tradition of Charles Dickens or Mark Twain. Is it the low brow stigma of baseball as his first subject matter that cost him the laurels lavished on writers on proper literary subjects, such as bullfighting, rum running or marlin fishing? But then, how could Bernard Malamud attain the first rank in American letters, having begun his career in 1952 with *The Natural*, a novel about baseball?

The typical view of popular fiction is captured by two equations: Popular Literature=Bad Literature (if it were good, it would not be popular in the first place); and Popular Literature=Genre Literature (it appeals to many by being simplistic,

"The average critic never recognizes achievement when it happens. He explains it after it has become respectable."

—Author Raymond Chandler, *The Simple Art of Murder*

schematic and repetitive—in other words, by amply betraying its heritage). Given such premises, it is hardly surprising many critics continue to subscribe to the myth of a categorical disunity between "serious" literature and genre fiction. When the latter enters the picture at all, it is mostly in case studies which exemplify and buttress the same hierarchical system which can accept the literature of entertainment from the past, but only the literature of enlightenment from the present.

Yet popular fiction is by now a ubiquitous phenomenon which informs and in many cases forms the background of many popular values and beliefs. And among its offerings, often destined for the cultural trash can, are literary works as good as anything in the canon. The charge that genre fiction has no merit could only be parroted by someone ignorant of the quirky horror novels of Thomas M. Disch, the neo-hardboiled *noir* of Walter Mosley, the ground-breaking police procedurals of Ed McBain, the literate spy fiction of David Cornwell (better known as John Le Carré), the revisionist westerns of Larry McMurtry, the scientific fiction of Stanislaw Lem, the tragi-comic fantasies of Karel Čapek, or the stylish erotica of Erica Jong.

Raymond Chandler, at once a lifelong purveyor of hardboiled mysteries and one of the most accomplished stylist of the century, demurred in the introduction to *The Simple Art of Murder*: "The average critic never recognizes achievement when it happens. He explains it after it has become respectable."

It might thus be worth our while to prospect the less charted regions of the literary country to see if we have not lost anything by sticking to the well-trodden highways. ■

Submit talks and events to Cora Doucette by 9 a.m. one week prior to publication. Fax 492-2997 or e-mail at cora.doucette@ualberta.ca.

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

January 10, 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Ann Laura Stoler, Professor of Anthropology, History and Women's Studies at the University of Michigan, will be giving a Public Lecture called "Genealogies of the Intimate and Imperial Rule" as part of the annual Frucht Memorial Lecture Series in Anthropology. Room 129, Education South.

DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

December 18, 1:00 pm
Bin Li, "Characterization of a cytoplasmic protein located to the bile canaliculi of hepatocytes." Room G217 Biological Sciences Building.
December 18, 4:00 pm
Christopher Buddle, "Spider communities in boreal mixed-wood forests of Alberta: succession, species interactions, and habitat utilization." Room CW313, Biological Sciences Building.
December 19, 12:30 pm
Andre Desrochers, "Behavioural mechanisms and avian responses to forest edges." Room M149 Biological Sciences Building.
December 20, 1:00 pm
Hannah Buckley, "Community structure of four taxa in the aspen parkland of south-central Alberta, Canada." Room M-137, Biological Sciences Building.
January 12, 12:00 noon
Samantha Song, "TBA." Room CMP B2, Computing Sciences Building.
January 12, 4:00 pm
Laura Frost, "Mutational analysis of F-pilin reveals functional domains." Room M-149, Biological Sciences Building.
January 19, 4:00 pm
Andrew McMillan, "Assembly and activity of RNA processing machines." Room M-149, Biological Sciences Building.

DEPARTMENT OF BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING

December 20, 5:30 pm

Garry Wheeler, PhD, Research Manager, Steadward Centre on "The Role of Biomedical Engineering in the Training of Athletes with a Disability." Room 231, Civil Electrical Building.

JOHN DOSSETOR HEALTH ETHICS CENTRE

January 19, 12:00 noon
Al-Noor Nenshi Nathoo, "MRIs, SUVs, and ORT (Oral Rehydration Therapy): Bioethics and Global Poverty." Room 207, Heritage Medical Research Centre.

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA LIBRARIES

January 15, 10:00 am to 11:30 am
January 23, 12:30 to 2:00 pm
January 26, 12:00 to 1:30 pm
Hands-on session "Navigating the Health Sciences Library." For all University of Alberta students, staff, and faculty who are new users of the John W. Scott Health Sciences Library. Location: WMC, 2F1.02 computer lab.

DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACOLOGY

December 18, 4:00 pm
Dr. Marek Radomski, "Matrix metalloproteinases in pharmacological and clinical investigations." Room 9-68 Medical Sciences Building.

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSIOLOGY

December 15, 3:00 pm
Dr Alexander S Easton, "Models of the blood-brain barrier in inflammation." Room 207 Heritage Medical Research Centre.

PRAIRIE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

December 15, 11:00 am
Guest Lecturer, Dr. Vic Satzewich, Department of Sociology, McMaster University, "The Ukrainian Diaspora and the Challenges of Independence." Co-sponsored by the Department of Sociology and the Prairie Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Integration. Room 5-15 Tory Building.

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UNIVERSITY UTILITIES will be commissioning a new power generating system during DECEMBER 2000 and JANUARY 2001.

There could be short power interruptions during this period, even though we will take every precaution possible to minimize such occurrences.

In the event that power interruptions do occur, please be assured that we will do our best to restore service in the absolute minimum amount of time possible.

We regret any inconvenience that these possible outages may cause.

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positions

The records arising from this competition will be managed in accordance with provisions of the Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA).

The University of Alberta hires on the basis of merit. We are committed to the principle of equity of employment. We welcome diversity and encourage applications from all qualified women and men, including persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities, and Aboriginal persons.

NETWORK MANAGER PROTEIN ENGINEERING NETWORK

PENCE, The Protein Engineering Network of Centres of Excellence of Canada, is currently in the process of recruiting a network manager to work in its national office. PENCE is a national network representing a unique partnership of 18 universities, hospitals and research institutes across Canada comprising many of the top Canadian researchers specializing in the study of proteins.

We are open to applicants sufficiently conversant with the language of protein science to interact effectively with the research scientists. Ideally, the candidate will be able to see possible synergies between individual research projects and/or researchers. At the minimum, an undergraduate degree in biochemistry or a related field is required. This should be coupled with a keen interest in the area of protein science. The successful candidate will be highly organized, computer literate and an effective communicator (both orally and in writing), with the ability to work both independently and as part of a team.

Working with the scientific leader, the network manager will coordinate all the scientific activities of the PENCE network, including serving as liaison with the scientific community. In addition, the network manager will be responsible for the general operation of PENCE's national centre, and the organization of PENCE corporate activities. The successful candidate will also play a major role in the outreach activities of PENCE and assist with charting the future course of the organization.

The position is based in Edmonton and is available immediately. Salary will be commensurate with qualifications and experience. Please send your résumé and a list of referees, in confidence, to Dr. Steve Withers, PENCE Scientific Director & CEO; e-mail steve.withers@pence.ca or fax (604) 822-8869. Please visit our Web site at www.pence.ca for more information.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE

The Faculty of Extension, University of Alberta (Canada) invites applications for a tenure track, assistant professor position, beginning July 1, 2001. This position will be affiliated with the faculty's government studies unit.

The successful candidate will possess a PhD, or its equivalent, in one of the following disciplines or fields of study: political science or public policy, public administration or public management, public economics, local authority law.

The appointee will be dedicated to promoting good government through rigorous research and scholarship, and by teaching and exercising academic leadership within a university outreach context. A willingness to adopt and experiment with the new academic technologies for learning is important. Preference will be given in selection to candidates whose research and teaching are focused on local and regional government and governance.

The preferred candidate will demonstrate experience in the following: university teaching and/or outreach experience in one of the preferred disciplines or disciplinary sub-fields; research/scholarship and academic publication in one of the focus areas; use of academic technologies for learning; participation in a national and international network of experts in the field or related areas.

The appointee will be an effective communicator who can command respect and recognition from high levels of government. The ability to demonstrate strategic thinking within the university continuing education context would be highly desirable.

Government Studies activities and programs currently focus on practicing local authority administrators, local authority elected officials, and the broader community leadership involved in local governance. The organization specializes in developing and implementing distance education programs and special policy seminars. A new strategic emphasis concentrates on research in aid of the local government sector.

Salary and benefits will be negotiated within the Assistant Professor range. Applications must include: a letter addressing the above qualifications and desired attributes; a current curriculum vitae; information for three academic references.

Applications should be forward by Feb. 28, 2001 to: D.R. Garrison, Dean, Faculty of Extension, 2-02 University Extension Centre, 8303-112 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6G 2T4.

In accordance with Canadian Immigration requirements, priority will be given to Canadian citizens and permanent residents of Canada. If suitable Canadian citizens and permanent residents cannot be found, other individuals will be considered.

Information on the Faculty of Extension is available online at: <http://www.extension.ualberta.ca/>. Information on Government Studies is available online at: <http://www.extension.ualberta.ca/govstudies/>.

DIRECTOR PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS IN BUSINESS AND APPLIED SCIENCES, FACULTY OF EXTENSION

The Faculty of Extension at the University of Alberta invites applications for the position of director of the newly integrated unit of Professional Programs in Business and Applied Sciences. Supported by an academic steering committee providing strategic counsel, the director will report to the dean. The director will provide program leadership consistent with the vision and strategic goals of the faculty.

Professional Programs in Business and Applied Sciences delivers over 430 course sections to more than 7,000 learners per year. Courses are offered through diploma, certificate, seminar and special project programs. Outreach services to local and international organizations in learning design, customized delivery, consultation and evaluation are another important aspect of unit activity. Strategic initiatives include implementing innovative and specialized credential programs in continuing professional development and information technology, establishing new development and delivery partnerships, knowledge management, and expanding technology-assisted learning including customized services in workplace learning.

The director must demonstrate knowledge of professional learning needs and trends in business, science and technology sectors. Awareness of emerging workplace learning and knowledge management practices is also important. Integral to this position is a commitment to exemplary, responsive continuing education services, an entrepreneurial attitude, proven leadership within a post-secondary setting, and strong financial planning, consultation, management and interpersonal skills.

The successful candidate will possess a minimum of a masters degree in the field(s) of business, science, adult or continuing education. This is a full-time contract position with prospects of appointment, upon approvals, to a continuing administrative professional officer position. Salary will be commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Applications must include a letter addressing required qualifications, a current curriculum vitae, and three professional references, and should be forwarded by Jan. 10, 2001 to: D.R. Garrison, Dean, Faculty of Extension, 2-02 University Extension, Centre, 8303 - 112 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6G 2T4.

SUPERINTENDENT, BUILDING TRADES FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Facilities Management is responsible for operation, maintenance, and management of University of Alberta facilities with a gross building area exceeding 8,000,000 sq. ft. and with a value in the order of \$1.3 billion.

Reporting to the director, Facilities Management, the superintendent of building trades is responsible for the planning, coordination, supervision, and management of all building maintenance functions in university buildings and facilities. This position is also responsible for all renovation, infrastructure renewal and upgrading work performed by building trades staff.

The superintendent is responsible for approximately 100 trades staff in all areas of the architectural, mechanical, and electrical disciplines. This position is responsible for preparation and administration of an operating budget in the order of \$4,000,000 and capital works in the order of \$10,000,000. The superintendent is responsible for planning and implementation of preventive and planned maintenance programs, and for development of short- and long-range plans for facilities infrastructure renewal and upgrading.

Strong technical skills and ability to deal with staff and clients in a multidisciplinary environment are required. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, the ability to interact with people in a professional manner, and a strong commitment to customer service are critical to this position.

Ideal candidates should have a B.Sc. in Engineering, be a professional engineer and have a minimum of 15 years of experience, generally in design and

construction, and specifically and extensively in maintenance of building systems. The position requires a good working knowledge of mechanical, electrical, architectural, and structural building systems, as well as knowledge in building and related codes. Maintenance and operations experience in an institutional and post secondary environment would be an asset. The salary range for this position is \$53,194 to \$84,218.

Submit résumés, and the names of at least three references by Jan. 3, 2001 to: Facilities Management Personnel, 420 General Services Building, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2H1, Fax: (780) 492-7582.

ELECTRICAL ENGINEER FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Facilities Management is responsible for operation, maintenance, and management of University of Alberta facilities with a gross building area exceeding 8,000,000 sq. ft. and with a value in the order of \$1.3 billion.

Reporting to the senior engineer, Energy Management, the electrical engineer is responsible for the technical and management activities of an electrical building systems energy management program. The primary objective is to reduce the university of Alberta's electrical costs through design and implementation of energy-efficient retrofits to existing lighting systems. This position is also responsible for operational aspects of building systems including troubleshooting of electrical outages, monitoring of power quality, and implementing solutions to electrical operational problems.

This position is responsible for a capital budget in the order of \$2 million, including development of short and long range plans for upgrading building lighting and electrical systems.

Strong technical skills and ability to deal with staff and clients in a multidisciplinary environment are required. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, and the ability to interact with people in a professional manner with a strong commitment to customer service are critical to this position.

Ideal candidates should have a B.Sc. in electrical engineering, be a professional engineer and have a minimum of seven to 10 years of consulting engineering experience in design and construction of building electrical systems, with extensive experience in state-of-the-art and innovative lighting systems design. Experience in energy efficient lighting designs and eligibility for lighting certification (L.C.) with IESNA would be an asset. The position requires a good working knowledge of related building systems such as mechanical systems, control systems and operation of building systems. The salary range for this position is \$41,243 to \$65,295.

Submit résumés, and the names of at least three references by Dec. 21, 2000 to: Facilities Management Personnel, 420 General Services Building, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2H1, Fax: (780) 492-7582.

EDITOR OF FOLIO OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Office of Public Affairs requires an editor for Folio, its faculty and staff newspaper. Folio is an award-winning, lively publication focusing on University of Alberta research and teaching and offering a forum for opinion. It is published 21 times a year and has a circulation of 7,500. Folio is also available on the Web at <http://www.ualberta.ca/FOLIO/>.

The editor is responsible for writing, editing and managing design, photography, printing and advertising sales for Folio. The successful candidate will have a strong journalism background, superior writ-

ing ability and demonstrated success as a managing editor. Salary range: \$37,620 to \$48,288 per annum plus benefits.

Please send applications by Dec. 31, 2000 to Lee Elliott, Director, Public Affairs, 400 Athabasca Hall, University of Alberta.

CONFERENCE CO-ORDINATOR UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA INTERNATIONAL

University of Alberta International (UAI) invites applications for the position of Conference Co-ordinator. University of Alberta International plays a pivotal role in the international activities of the University of Alberta community. UAI works with students and faculties in pursuing innovative learning, research and collaborative opportunities which include assisting students in meeting their international goals, building academic partnerships and engaging in programs with industries, governments and funding agencies.

Reporting to the associate vice-president (international), and working closely with the director of international relations and international relations officer (USA/Europe), the conference coordinator is responsible for planning, organizing, and coordinating the Partnership for Knowledge Forum 2 to be held at the University of Alberta from Oct. 15 - 17, 2001. The forum is an international conference between Canadian and British universities, with approximately two hundred (200) senior administrators in attendance.

Responsibilities include:

- Working closely with the conference committee to ensure clear and efficient flow of communication and prompt follow-up.
- Assisting with the planning of the conference program.
- Working closely with senior administration, in conjunction with University of Alberta International Relations, to ensure timely and effective decision-making.
- Preparing funding proposals.
- Assisting with conference-promotional missions to the UK.
- Working with the communications coordinator to develop short information pamphlets on the conference.
- Ensuring all logistical and practical details are well managed.
- From time to time, the coordinator may be required to assist with other upcoming conferences or events.

This position will be of interest to highly motivated and enthusiastic individuals who possess excellent organizational, analytical and communication skills. Experience in conference planning/coordination is required, with a strong emphasis on details and logistics. An ability to work in cross-cultural settings is necessary. Experience in international relations is preferred and prior experience in the United Kingdom is an asset. Candidates should have strong computer skills, particularly in word processing and databases. Proficiency in English language is required; French is an asset (spoken, in particular).

This is a full-time temporary administrative/professional officer position starting immediately and continuing until Nov. 1, 2001. Annual salary range is \$36,500 to \$45,000 commensurate with qualifications and experience. The application deadline is Friday, Jan. 5, 2001.

Letters of application, including a résumé and the names of three references, should be sent to Rae McDonald, Director, International Relations, University of Alberta International, 1204 College Plaza, 8215 - 112 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2C8 (available via campus mail), fax: (780) 492-1488.

2001 ALAN BLIZZARD AWARD CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The deadline for applications for the Alan Blizzard Award, an award recognizing collaborative projects which improve student learning, is Jan. 31, 2001. The award is given by the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education and is open to groups or two or more individuals, at least one of whom must be currently teaching at a Canadian university, regardless of discipline or level of appointment. For further information on the criteria and application procedure, please view: www.umanitoba.ca:80/academic_support/uts/stlhe/ Application forms are also available from the Office of the Vice-President (Academic) or from: Pat Rogers, past-president STLHE, Centre for the Support of Teaching, York University, Toronto, ONT., M3J 1P3, Tel: (416) 736-5754.

events

EXHIBITION

MC MULLEN GALLERY, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA HOSPITAL

December 2, 2000 to January 28, 2001
Collected Vision. This exhibition celebrates the Alberta Craft Council's 20th anniversary. It also presents a year-by-year sample of fine craft purchased from Council members, by the Alberta Foundation for the Arts. Hours: Monday to Friday, 10 am to 8 pm, Saturday and Sunday, 1 pm to 8 pm. 8440 - 112 Street, Edmonton. Phone: 407-7152.

BRUCE PEEL SPECIAL COLLECTIONS LIBRARY

On view from September 15 to December 20, 2000
Studios Youth and Imperial Adventure. The George James Collection of Children's Books. For more information please contact Jeannine Green, Assistant Special Collections Librarian, 492-7928.

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION CENTRE GALLERY

Until December 15, 2000
Mechanics of Vision - Drawing in Alberta. Drawings from some of Alberta's prominent artists and the collection of Alberta Foundation for the Arts. Gallery hours are from 8:30 am to 8:00 pm Monday to Thursday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Friday, and 9:00 am to 12:00 noon Saturday. Second floor, University Extension Centre, 8303 - 112 Street. Information: 492-3034.

LAW SHOW 2001

FACULTY OF LAW, LAW SHOW 2001

Friday, January 19 and Saturday, January 20, 2001
Tickets are now on sale for the 6th annual Law Show and accompanying silent auction. Proceeds from the show and silent auction will support Edmonton's Kid's Kottage Foundation. Tickets are only \$15.00 and are available by calling 431-0044. The show begins at 7:30 pm on both evenings. On Saturday night the silent auction begins at 6:00 pm. Come out and support Kid's Kottage and the Faculty of Law.

LITERACY RESEARCH LUNCHEON

LITERACY RESEARCH LUNCHEON

Wednesday, January 10, 12:30 to 2:00 pm
The presentation "Theoretical Foundations for Teaching the English Language Arts," will be given

by Margaret Iveson, Department of Secondary Education. Location: 651a Education South. As the lunch is catered, please RSVP by Monday, January 8, to Paula Kelly, 492-4250, ext. 292 or paula.kelly@ualberta.ca

MUSIC

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

January 9, 8:00 pm
Faculty and Friends, Jeff Anderson, trumpet, Terence Dawson, piano
January 12, 8:00 pm
Music at Convocation Hall, Jacques Despres, piano
January 15, 12:10 pm
Music at Noon, Convocation Hall, Student Recital Series featuring students from the Department of Music.
January 23, 8:00 pm
New Music Concert. A program of recent works by student composers at the University of Alberta. Free admission
January 26, 8:00 pm
Faculty and Friends, Judith Richardson, soprano, Janet Scott Hoyt, piano.
To confirm concert information, please call 492-0601.

UNIVERSITY TEACHING SERVICES

GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTS ORIENTATION

January 4 and January 5, 2001, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm
Orientation open to all graduate students, offered before classes begin in January, free of charge, aimed at the novice instructor. Provides opportunities for networking and for learning more about teaching. Location: Room 265, Central Academic Building. Advance registration is required. Contact UTS at 492-3208, email: mpwilson@ualberta.ca

ORIENTATION

SUPPORT STAFF ORIENTATION FOR NEW EMPLOYEES TO THE UNIVERSITY.

Date: January 25, 2001; Time: 12:00-3:30pm
(includes tour & lunch). For more information and to register please contact Marilyn Schwindt at 4350 or email marilyn.schwindt@ualberta.ca.

notices

Please send notices attention Folio 400 Athabasca Hall, University of Alberta, T6G 2E8 or e-mail public.affairs@ualberta.ca. Notices should be received by 3 p.m. one week prior to publication.

EFF-FSIDA (FUND FOR SUPPORT OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES)

Application Deadline
The deadline for receipt of applications to the EFF-FSIDA is 4 p.m. Jan. 15, 2001. The next competition deadline dates are April 16 and Oct. 15, 2001. This fund enables staff and graduate students (normally PhD candidates) of the University of Alberta to participate in research and in the international transfer of knowledge and expertise through partnerships in developing countries. Applications and guidelines are available on the University of Alberta International Web site at www.international.ualberta.ca, under "Overseas Projects and Programs" or from the FSIDA Secretary at University of Alberta International, 2-10 University Hall.



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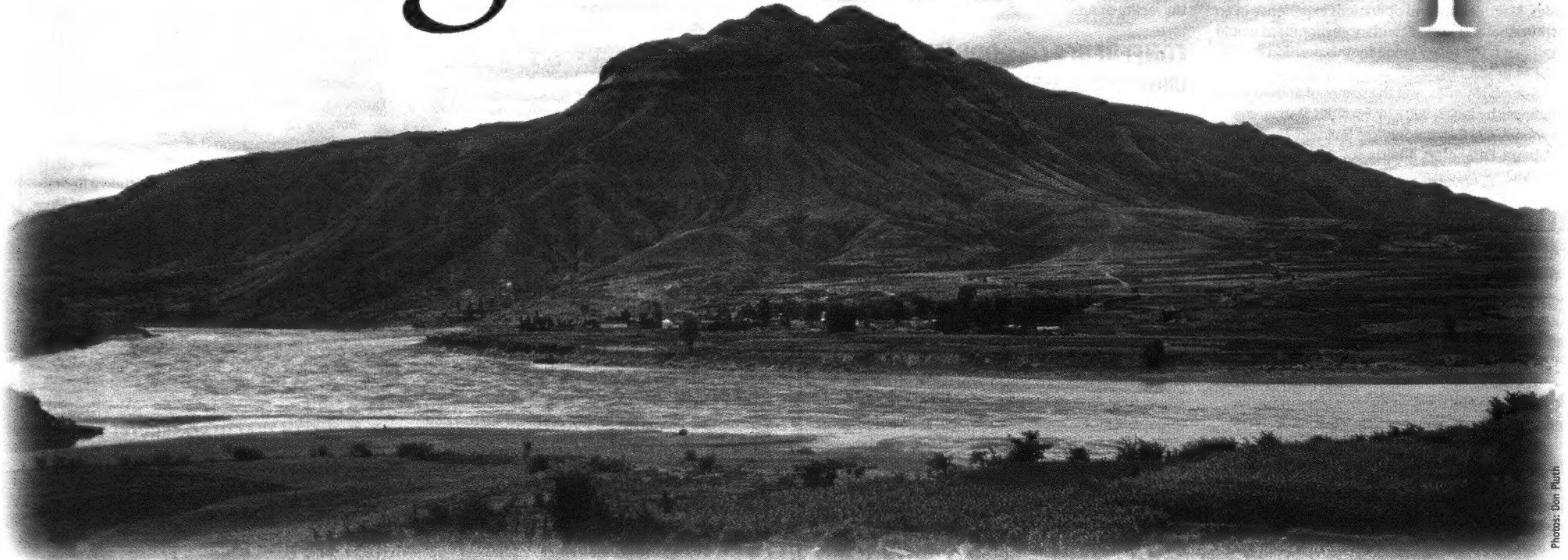
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Yangtze clean up



Photos: Don Pluth

A childhood friendship leads the university to help make a difference

By Rick Pilger

When Sam Chao returned to the land of his birth as a passenger on a Yangtze River cruise, he saw beyond the spectacular canyons and gorges, the great cliffs and the cultural treasures. He saw a river turbid and dirty, silt-laden and saddened.

There and then he dedicated himself to finding a way to restore the river to the sparkling clear waterway he had known as a child, a river supporting abundant plant and animal life, a river whose beauty had been the subject of poets and painters since time immemorial.

Returning to his Los Angeles home, Chao thought about what he could do and who could help him. After discussing his vision with his wife and receiving her support, he called one of his oldest friends.

When Larry Wang received Chao's phone call, he was amazed at the latter's commitment. There is a Chinese proverb, explains Wang, that says if one tosses a brick into a collection basket for a righteous cause, jade—representing wealth—will soon follow to support the cause. The "brick" his friend was prepared to toss in was nothing less than his entire life savings. A successful engineer whose children had graduated from university and were well on their way to making their own way in life, Chao was prepared to contribute US\$1 million to restoring the river to something approaching its former grandeur.

Out of that phone call has evolved the Ecological Conservancy Outreach (ECO) Fund based at the University of Alberta and managed through a trust account administered by the Office of the President. The sole purpose of the fund is the support of Chao's vision. Every dollar donated to it will be spent on the restoration of the Yangtze.

The co-founder (with Chao) of the Fund—the friend to whom Chao placed

his phone call—is the U of A's Dr. Larry Wang, a professor of biological sciences who also serves as an adviser on international affairs to the university's president, Dr. Rod Fraser.

Wang and Chao share the bonds of a common history. Both were born in Chongqing in China's Szechuan Province, both grew up in Taiwan after their families moved there as followers of Chiang Kai-Shek, and both attended the same elementary school. When they entered junior high school, both were chosen to be a part of an experimental program that placed a cohort of the brightest children together for the remainder of their grade-school years. Although they parted when they entered different universities, Wang and Chao have remained close over the years.

"I was totally stunned," recalls Wang, of the phone call he received about the million-dollar donation. Inspired by his friend's selflessness, he quickly agreed to help. Chao was looking to Wang for assistance because he didn't want to simply turn his money over to some large development fund. He wanted to know what his money was doing and to have confidence that it was being used wisely. He hoped that Wang, with his academic background and connections, could help.

Wang assured his friend that the University of Alberta had the necessary expertise in soil conservation, forestry management, and rural economic development to put his vision into action, and in short order he had secured the full support of a dozen or more of his colleagues from

across campus.

He also gained the enthusiastic support of President Rod Fraser, who was happy to take the project under the wing of his office.

The main culprit in the deteriorating water quality of the Yangtze is the intense cultivation that has taken place on the steep slopes that border the river and its tributaries. Where there were once vast forests that could absorb huge quantities of monsoon rain, there are now terraced fields from which rainwater pours into

the river, taking with it huge amounts of topsoil.

Restoring the Yangtze calls for enormous efforts at reforestation, says Wang. The plan of action worked out for the ECO Fund involves identifying critical sites for reforestation and then working with local governments and farmers to find suit-

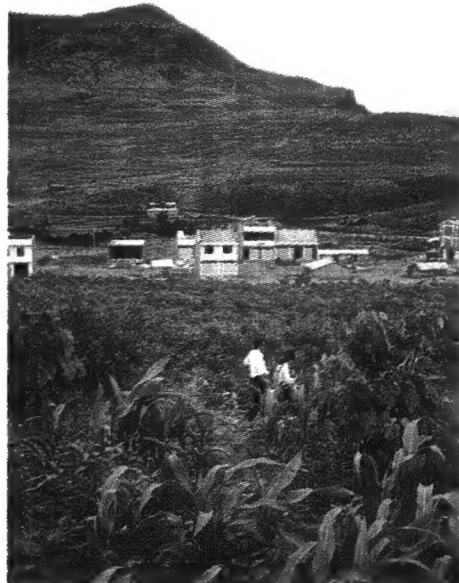
able solutions. "We have to be aware of the social conditions," explains Wang. "The local farmers depend on this land for their livelihood. Through sustainable forestry, we have to provide them a viable alternative to farming."

Although the ECO Fund was not formally launched until October 2000, two projects are already underway. Both are being done in collaboration with local agencies and both are based in China's rugged Yunnan Province, close to the river's source in the Qinhai highlands.

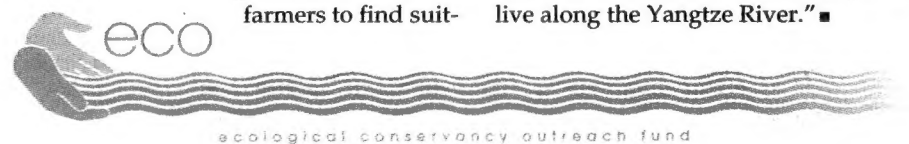
The U of A has a great role to play in both ECO projects says Wang—everything from providing expertise in tissue-culture techniques and forest genetics to using remote sensing to monitor the land use changes taking place. Wang is particularly keen on getting University of Alberta graduate students involved. "Applied research on the Yangtze River represents a prime opportunity for a broad-based international education," he says.

The two projects now underway are only the beginning. A major proposal to the Canadian International Development Agency is in the works and a list of critical sites in Yunnan where soil erosion is severe and recurring is being compiled. A fundraising initiative is also being launched.

Wang is hopeful that when the fundraising begins in earnest more donations from overseas Chinese will be forthcoming. "This is a movement that transcends geographic and political boundaries," he says. "It is an opportunity to restore the ecological balance of this part of the world and help millions and millions of people who live along the Yangtze River." ■



Where once there were forests: crops on the banks of the Yangtze River.



folio **back**
page



'A river turbid and dirty, silt-laden and saddened.'